

Ranking Republican on House Elections Committee Criticizes Department of Justice For Failure to Enforce Federal Election Laws; Says Continued Military Disenfranchisement is Unacceptable

WASHINGTON - Today the Committee on House Administration's Ranking Republican Dan Lungren, R-Calif., criticized the Department of Justice for its failure to enforce federal election laws, specifically questioning the Department's inability to ensure that states comply with the MOVE Act by mailing military ballots prior to the 45 day statutory deadline.

[In a letter sent to Assistant Attorney General Thomas Perez](#) , Rep. Lungren rebuked the DOJ's efforts in New Mexico and Illinois, where the DOJ waited until a month past the deadline to file lawsuits against the states for failing to mail ballots to military personnel serving overseas.

"In both cases it appears that DOJ learned of the noncompliance not through its own efforts, but as a result of private parties contacting election jurisdictions and sharing the results of their inquiries," Lungren noted.

"If the Voting Section has 20 staff members engaged in a nationwide compliance program, I would expect that they would detect noncompliance promptly without relying on private organizations

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Lungren also sharply criticized the Department for failing to enforce compliance in New York after the Department of Defense granted the state an extension to comply. He said that these systemic failures suggest that, *"the Department seems to be more focused on protecting its image than on building an effective mechanism to produce compliance."*

In response to the Department's failures, Lungren called for a more active role by the House of Representatives in enforcing voting laws. *"It is my intent that the Committee on House Administration, as the committee of jurisdiction over Federal elections, will take a more active role in the next Congress in ensuring that the laws enacted by Congress to protect the ability of Americans to vote are followed."*

For more information, please contact the Committee press office at (202) 225-8281.